



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TWO ALIEN SMUGGLERS SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SMUGGLING 15-YEAR-OLD WHO DIED IN THE DESERT

TUCSON, Ariz. – Juan Jose Fimbres-Moreno, 36, of Zitaquero, Michoacan, Mexico, and Bruno Alberto Gonzalez-Espinoza, 22, of Ures, Sonora, Mexico were each sentenced here yesterday to 10 years in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Cindy K. Jorgenson. Both pleaded guilty to Transportation of Illegal Aliens for Profit Resulting in Death on March 24, 2008.

On April 26, 2007, U.S. Border Patrol agents responded to a call by a rancher in Sonoita, Ariz. that two illegal aliens had come to his ranch to report the death of one of their companions. Agents responded and found the body of a 15-year-old Mexican citizen. The two other illegal aliens reported that they had been with a group of 15 other aliens and were guided by two males. The guides and group abandoned them when the teenager had passed away the night before.

When taken to the Sonoita Border Patrol station to be interviewed, the two illegal aliens spotted their group which had been apprehended earlier that morning and identified Fimbres-Moreno and Gonzalez-Espinoza as the smugglers who had left them and the teenager behind. Their group had crossed into the U.S. by walking through the desert and they were to pay \$1500 to \$1800 each to be smuggled to their final destinations within the U.S. Shortly after their 3-day trek through the desert began, the teenager became ill and asked to be left behind to be rescued. An autopsy revealed that he died from exposure due to hyperthermia.

In sentencing the defendants, Judge Jorgenson sentenced upward of the U.S. Sentencing guidelines, noting that the 15-year-old male died in the desert under their care. The two defendants had neglected to report to Border Patrol agents that three people had been left behind when they had been caught the next morning. They had not done anything during the three days to get aid for the young man who was in obvious distress. In determining the appropriate sentence, she also considered the fact that the two defendants left a young female and another male behind with deceased teenager without any assurances that they would be safe. Furthermore, the judge indicated that the sentence should reflect the serious nature of their conduct.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Border Patrol. The prosecution was handled by Serra M. Tsethlikai, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: CR-07-943-TUC-CKJ
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